

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Plaintiff

v.

COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO, et al.

Defendants.

Civil No. 12-2039 (GAG)

Order re: Counsel for PRPB

PRPB's current counsel, McConnell Valdés, has informed both the Special Master, Monitor and United States Department of Justice that as of July 30th, its legal representation in this case concluded. As of today, no motion to withdraw as counsel, however, has been filed. More so, no appearance of new counsel has been filed either.

In the meantime, the monitoring as well as implementation of the Reform process by PRPB continues and will not be stayed nor delayed. While a myriad of matters do not require the immediate review and participation of counsel, ultimately there are other matters that indeed require PRPB to rely on the advice and participation of its counsel.

Accordingly, the Court hereby **ORDERS** the Puerto Rico Department of Justice to immediately reassume the role of counsel until there is in fact an appearance by new counsel (or the matter is explained otherwise by counsel of McConnell Valdés).

The momentum in the Police Reform cannot now momentarily take hiatus, not for days, weeks or months until new counsel appears and familiarizes itself with the case. Otherwise, the important Reform work of the Court, Monitor, Special

Master and USDOJ will be left in limbo, to the detriment of the People of Puerto Rico and PRPB itself. Counsel from the Commonwealth Justice Department, in turn, are most familiar with the Agreement and details of the case. Moreover, they can eventually assist in the smoothest transition possible during any change of counsel process.

Finally, this order is not to be interpreted in any manner or form as the Court telling PRPB who its outside counsel must precisely be. That is a matter solely for the Commonwealth to decide. But, until a formal appearance of new counsel occurs, the Puerto Rico Department of Justice by law is PRPB's counsel, and indeed ably handled this case before outside counsel was retained.

Counsel for McConnell Valdés will immediately file either a motion to withdraw or an informative motion to the effect that they will remain on board until further notice. Normally, the Court, until new counsel officially appears, requires counsel of record to continue. However, in this specific instance, because the Commonwealth Department of Justice can readily recommence, the Court will so allow, upon the corresponding filing of the requisite motion to withdraw.

The Special Master will immediately provide to the Secretary of Public Safety copy of this Order so that he be aware, and instruct all in the PRPB ranks that its business as usual insofar the Reform is concerned.

SO ORDERED.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, this 4th of August of 2020.

s/ Gustavo A. Gelpí
Gustavo A. Gelpí
US District Judge